

**Statement of Dwight Williams  
Chief Security Officer  
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Before the House Committee on Government Reform  
July 27, 2005**

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Minority Member Waxman, and members of the Committee: Thank you for the opportunity to address you today and for your ongoing support of the Department of Homeland Security's efforts to keep America secure.

I am Dwight Williams, the Chief Security Officer for the Department of Homeland Security, and, as such, I am also the Chair of the Interagency Security Committee (ISC). I am honored and pleased to appear before the House Government Reform Committee today to discuss the ISC's "Security Standards for Leased Space," our process for developing these standards, and our efforts to implement them.

Background on the Interagency Security Committee

The bombing of the Federal building in Oklahoma City on April 19, 1995, painfully illustrated the need for effective and consistent standards for the security of our Federal facilities. In the aftermath of the attack, an Executive Order was issued to establish the Interagency Security Committee to enhance the quality and effectiveness of security and protection of Federal buildings and facilities for nonmilitary activities, and to provide a permanent body to address Government-wide security issues for these Federal facilities.

Specifically, the duties and responsibilities of the ISC are to:

- Establish policies for security and protection of Federal facilities;
- Develop and evaluate security standards for Federal facilities;
- Develop a strategy for ensuring compliance with such standards;

- Oversee the implementation of appropriate security measures in Federal facilities; and
- Take actions to enhance the quality and effectiveness of security and protection at Federal facilities.

There are 21 primary members of the ISC and 14 associate members. The ISC is composed of representatives from every Federal department (including the Departments of Justice, Defense, State, and the Treasury), as well as officials from other agencies with key roles in setting security policy for the Federal Government. Executive Order 13286 transferred the functions and responsibilities of the ISC to the Department of Homeland Security, designating the Secretary of Homeland Security as the Chair of the ISC. The Secretary has, in turn, delegated this authority to me, as the Chief Security Officer of the Department.

When the Oklahoma City tragedy occurred in April 1995, the Government had not established building security standards for either Federally-owned or leased buildings. At the direction of the President, the Department of Justice completed a study shortly after the bombing to assess the vulnerability of Federal office buildings in the United States -- particularly with respect to acts of terrorism and other forms of violent activities. The Department of Justice study recommended minimum security standards for these Federal buildings, setting forth specific security requirements regarding perimeter, entry, and interior security, as well as general security planning considerations.

In 1997, the General Services Administration (GSA) compiled draft Security Criteria based on the Department of Justice standards. In a series of working group discussions, the ISC updated the criteria by incorporating recommendations based upon

the experiences of agencies, cost considerations, and technological innovations. This effort resulted in the ISC issuing formal Security Design Criteria for New Federal Office Buildings on May 30, 2001. As the name implies, these standards applied primarily to new buildings and construction.

#### Challenges of Leased Space and Development of Security Standards

Although the standards established by the Department of Justice study were intended for use in all Federally-occupied facilities, they were not readily adaptable to most leased locations. Building owners were often reluctant to make the significant alterations required to comply with stringent security standards, wary of the considerable expense involved. In addition, owners were concerned that non-Federal tenants may seek office space elsewhere, so that their employees and customers would not be inconvenienced by security measures. A recent Government Accountability Office report on Protection of National Icons and Federal Office Buildings issued last month confirmed the difficulty of these challenges in negotiating security for leased facilities.

This situation created what was essentially a double standard for *owned* buildings, which were required to comply with the security standards, and *leased* buildings, to which the ISC standards did not apply. In order to resolve this inequity, the ISC members established the “Lease Security Subcommittee” to develop a set of standards specifically for leased facilities. This Subcommittee consisted of experts from the Departments of Defense, Homeland Security, Justice, Transportation, and Health and Human Services, GSA, and other Government agencies. These participants were members of a multi-profession team that included security specialists, design professionals, engineers, architects, and fire and safety specialists from the member

agencies. The GSA Real Property Officer was designated as Chair of the Subcommittee with oversight by the Executive Director of the ISC.

To maintain consistency, the Subcommittee used the 1995 DOJ study and the 2001 ISC security standards for new buildings as the basis for compiling standards for leased space. The ISC Subcommittee also sought input from the real estate private sector. For example, the Subcommittee presented the proposed standards at Roundtable Sessions held in Washington D.C., Chicago, San Francisco, and New York. These sessions opened a dialogue between the Federal Government and prominent real estate holders who leased substantial amounts of office space to the Federal Government in each of these four cities. The comments received were valuable and allowed for the development of standards that provide the tightest security reasonably attainable and affordable within the marketplace.

In addition to the Industry Roundtable Sessions, the initial draft of the standards for leased facilities was sent to all of the Departments and agencies represented on the ISC, which in turn disseminated the document to their field offices for review and consideration. Through collecting and reviewing the feedback from these agencies, the ISC was able to further refine the standards to ensure that the standards would be both feasible and effective. Subsequently, the Subcommittee issued a proposed draft in July 2003. Following a careful analysis of the costs involved in implementing the standards, the Subcommittee approved a final draft in July 2004 and forwarded the draft to the full ISC for final approval.

The ISC formally approved the Security Standards for Leased Space on September 29, 2004, and the former Chair of the ISC (my predecessor) issued the

approved document on February 10, 2005. This product is the result of the efforts of many individuals, and it is a living document that will be reviewed annually at ISC meetings and updated as threats evolve and additional issues may be identified. The ISC continues to seek input from interested stakeholders and welcomes proposed suggestions for consideration.

### Application of Security Standards

Federal agencies face a range of security threats that is limited only by the imagination of our adversary. In the last decade, we have seen an aerial suicide attack, a biological attack on a post office, and shootings at our courthouses. While explosives are often used by our attacker, we must be prepared to deal with a variety of dangers, including chemical, biological, and radiological threats. The Security Standards for Leased Space are aimed to address these various perils.

Importantly, the Security Standards for Leased Space establish the recommended *minimum* security requirements for protection of a Federal facility, while providing agencies the necessary flexibility to address specific additional security threats or vulnerabilities. They do not prohibit an agency from imposing more stringent security requirements.

One purpose of the standards is to educate Federal agencies regarding what minimum security standards are prudent, in order to make informed security decisions. They are not intended to substitute the ISC's judgment for the agency's own in dictating what precise security measures are appropriate for a particular facility. Deciding how to best protect any specific location requires an individualized threat and vulnerability assessment and consideration of a variety of factors on a case-by-case basis. The ISC

standards grant agencies the flexibility to do just that, while at the same time ensuring that minimum security standards are met.

The ISC Security Standards adopt a balanced approach for agencies. They do not establish a single, one-size-fits-all standard for every Federal leased facility across the nation. Indeed, the Standards impose security requirements commensurate to the threat, vulnerability, and consequences of a successful attack on that facility. The ISC recognized that resources are limited within the Government, and we must be good stewards of the American taxpayer dollar. The need to keep our federal buildings open and accessible to the visiting public was also taken into account. Therefore, the ISC aimed to strike a prudent balance between security and feasibility. Accordingly, the Security Standards initially require a security specialist to determine the appropriate level of risk a Federal leased facility faces. There are four levels of criticality:

- A Level IV facility has over 450 Federal employees and typically has more than 150,000 square feet; high-volume of public contact; and tenant agencies may include high-risk law enforcement and intelligence agencies, courts, judicial offices, and highly sensitive Government records.
- A Level III facility has between 151 and 450 Federal employees and typically has from 80,000 to 150,000 square feet; a moderate to high volume of public contact; and tenant agencies may include law enforcement agencies, court related agencies and functions, and Government records and archives.
- A Level II facility has between 11 and 150 Federal employees and typically has from 2,500 to 80,000 square feet; a moderate volume of public contact; and Federal activities that are routine in nature similar to commercial activities.

- A Level I facility has 10 or fewer Federal employees and typically has 2,500 square feet or less of office space; and minimal public contact or contact with only a small segment of the population.

Once the security specialist has determined the appropriate security level of a particular facility, the Security Standards for Leased Space set forth the specific security requirements for these levels regarding five areas of concern: perimeter security, entry security, interior security, administrative procedures, and blast setback standards.

For example, the perimeter security standards prescribe requirements for securing the outside of the facility through vehicle inspections, garage access controls, exterior lighting, close circuit television monitoring, shatter-resistant materials, and similar measures. Entry security standards set forth the control of public lobbies and entryways through means such as security guards, magnetometers, X-ray machines, mail screening devices, and intrusion detection systems. Interior security includes control of access to the facility by visitors and securing restricted areas within the facility, while administrative procedures cover coordination with building managers and personnel security assurance.

Blast setback standards specify the desired distance from the facility to the nearest point of an explosion. This last area of concern – blast setback distance – is the most challenging for leased facilities, as the Government has few practical options for prescribing a blast setback distance for a building that already exists in a dense, urban environment.

Recognizing the limitations inherent in imposing security standards on leased facilities, the degree to which the standards must be applied depends on the particular

situation, whether it involves a new lease in an existing building, a new lease in a new building, or an existing lease that the Government has already entered. For new leases in existing buildings, the Security Standards must be met, except for those regarding blast setback. For new leases in new buildings, all of the Security Standards must be met, including those for blast setback, and the project must also meet the ISC standards for new buildings. For existing leases, every effort should be made to meet the Security Standards based upon a case-by-case assessment, recognizing that certain standards may not be feasible.

#### Implementation of the Leased Standards

The Department of Homeland Security is actively pursuing ways to implement these standards at its facilities. Our goal is to ensure that we have an effective program for securing leased facilities, using a risk-management approach based on three primary factors, as recently articulated by the Secretary: (1) threat; (2) vulnerability; and (3) consequences. As you can see, the level of security articulated in the ISC standards correspond directly to the level of risk incurred at each facility, particularly focused on events of mass consequence with the greatest damage.

Now that the agencies have received the February 2005 final standards, they are in the process of conducting the necessary risk assessments on their facilities in order to apply the standards. In addition, the Department of Homeland Security's Chief Administrative Officer has been working with other stakeholders to communicate and implement these standards throughout the Department. Further, the Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Federal Protective Service, is already using the Security Standards for Leased Space in conducting vulnerability assessments of Federal buildings.



Also, the Department of Homeland Security, through the ISC, is working with other Departments and agencies to promote the application and implementation of the security standards for leased facilities. For instance, the GSA is incorporating the standards into its operations, requiring that the standards be included in Solicitations for Offers for new leased facilities. In addition, the ISC members have provided positive feedback regarding the leased standards, and the ISC will monitor the progress.

In closing, I would like to thank the Committee again for the opportunity to appear before you here today. The security of our Federal employees is of paramount importance to the Department of Homeland Security, and we will continue to ensure that every effort is made to provide them with Government facilities that are designed and constructed with their security in mind. The Security Standards for Leased Space developed by the ISC membership establish consistency between Federally-owned and leased space, while also providing the flexibility for agencies to decide what additional security measures may be needed for a particular building or facility.

I would now be pleased to answer any questions you may have.